1:Beals E-5 (1940-1941)1946 NU34 Tarasco NU34
Sierra Tarascans

[p.156]

troughs and pipes (pl. 8, upper left). Large tanks exist in the approximate center of town, and water is also piped to a fountain in the plaza. The troughs leak, however, and in some places are low enough to permit water to be dipped directly from them. In consequence, if the flow is small, water may not reach the tanks in sufficient quantity. The lower portion of the town receives no water directly and the effort of obtaining water in those sections, particularly the southwest district, is considerable.

FOREST UTILIZATION

The forests are one of the important and most utilized natural resources of Cherán. Firewood, charcoal, posts, railroad ties, shakes, and lumber of various sizes are secured from the woods. Forests cover a very large part of the Cherán lands and most of the timber is on public domain, although some forest patches may occur on privately owned land. The public domain is regarded as belonging to the town, and the Federal Government levies a nominal land tax on the community for the forest lands. Each head of a household pays a fee (*rústica*), usually 25 centavos a quarter, which is collected by a committee on community property (*bienes comunales*). This sum covers the taxes and gives each person the right to cut firewood from public lands. Persons exploiting other forest resources pay more.

Until recently utilization of other forest resources was also open to everyone. The Department of Forestry of the Federal Government is now attempting to control the exploitation of the forests, and since 1940 any use of the forest for purposes other than cutting firewood requires a permit. In 1941 an effort was being made to restrict all lumbering and charcoal burning to members of a cooperative. This is discussed later.

With the exception of a few wealthy persons, everyone who is not lazy cuts his own firewood.[7]

[7] This is general over in such Mestizoized towns as Chilchota. In the latter town, however, there is some selling of firewood. During planting and harvest times the price is $0.35 a *carga* (burro load in this case); the rest of the year it is $0.25 a *carga*. Some people in Angahuan make a business of selling firewood to Mestizo Zamora; similar cases occur in [illegible] near Mestizo towns. *Ocote* (pitch pine), used principally for light, is also produced by the householder in Cherán. A long vertical cut is made on one side of a tree, which is gradually cut away as pitch accumulates. The tree is rarely cut through, but it usually dies from the operation. In Chilchota, where *ocote* (pitch pine) is sold,

[text continues on p. 17a]

311 boundary with Aranza and Cheranástico (pl. 1, upper left). The second most important "plain" is south and southeast of the town and extends on the east to the boundary with Nahuatzen. On the north and south the plain is bounded by hills and mountains, on the west by the slope to *el plan*. This area is usually referred to as Sharicho (šaričo). The "*plan* of Arantepacuaro" is south of the range of mountains of San Marcos, and extends to the boundary of Arantepacuaro on the south. The fourth and smallest "plain" of importance is northeast of the mountain of El Pilón.

Patches of sloping land under permanent cultivation are found scattered throughout the *municipio*. A large number of plots are found on the slope between *el plan* and the town and on the lower, gentler slopes of many mountains and cinder cones. These lands may be fenced or, more commonly, protected by deep ditches with hedges of agave on each side. Thorny crab apple or other fruit trees sometimes are also planted along ditches. Weak spots may be guarded by thorny brush and poles (pl. 4, lower left).

The so-called "joyas" are usually patches of only a few acres, often in isolated places far from town. They may be fenced or ditched to keep out animals and, like the other areas, are privately owned. Unless they are unusually fertile, "*joyas*" are cultivated only every other year.

The garden plots are within the town proper. In a few cases they may occupy an entire block, but normally they are merely part of a building lot (*solar*). Few of them are as large as half an acre. They are fenced and, unlike any other areas, they are cultivated every year.

Temporary fields are created by clearing the forest on community lands. Permission must
● [656] be obtained from the Federal Department of
[651] Forestry, Hunting and Fishing. Extra forest taxes must be paid, but charges are nominal. Usually the areas cleared are steep and the soil is poor and badly leached. Frequently, serious erosion results from such fields. Although cultivated only in alternate years, these fields are short-lived and are abandoned after a decade or so. Only use rights exist for such fields and after abandonment they revert to the public domain.

[156] mally either refuse information or obviously
423 lie about the size and value of their holdings.
435 The only further evidence available on this point is an actual sale observed in which a price of $40 was paid for about one-half hectare of wheat land. This piece was already planted to wheat and would yield about 2 *cargas*. On the other hand, $400 was being asked for a hectare of the best maize land.

Residential lands almost always include a garden plot as well as a building site. Only in the center of town is this not true. Prices of residential land, however, vary sharply with location and, to a lesser extent, with the depth of the lot and the quality of soil. In the center of town shallow lots may be valued at as much as $25 a meter frontage, while on the outskirts the price may be as low as $10 a meter. The garden plot produces blue maize, vegetables, fruit, and sometimes wheat. Probably a number of persons who were said to own land in Cherán actually own only a large residential plot, but this point was not investigated.

Forest lands are owned by the community.
423 They serve as the source of firewood, lumber,
311 and other forest products such as shakes and charcoal, and provide grazing for livestock; as sources of game or wild vegetable products their value is negligible.

311 The use of forest lands formerly was open to
656 all who paid a small fee to aid the community to pay the Federal taxes on the land. Persons using the forest only for firewood paid less than did charcoal burners, lumbermen, or shakemakers. In recent years a permit from the Federal Department of Forestry has been required for any but household use, and efforts were being made to limit rights to members of a cooperative organization.

LABOR

462 The sex division of labor in Cherán bars women from most productive pursuits. Women's activities conform closely to the ideals laid down recently by a notorious central European —children, kitchen, and church. Women perform all the household duties, such as cooking, sweeping, and washing, care for the children, make most of the clothes, carry water (but not firewood unless they have no close male relatives), and take food to their men at work.

2:Carrasco E-4, 5 (1945)1952
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175 for thirty or fifty years at very low rents, 423 so the Indians were actually left without [648] land. This is reported to have happened in [656] about fifty towns.[27]

The above information does not specify which towns lost their lands. The only concrete case cited is that involving the *jefe político* of Uruapan, a district which included several Indian villages. Unfortunately, no more information is available.

At the beginning of the Revolution, then, haciendas were found in the more level and warm areas north of the Sierra and Lake Pátzcuaro, on the southern shore of Lake Pátzcuaro, and also south of the present Tarascan region on the slopes toward the hot country. No hacienda has been studied nor is this the environment wherein the changes discussed in this paper take place. The present Tarascan-speaking area has not been dominated by haciendas, but is one of those where the towns of Indian peasants and artisans have survived longer, no matter what changes in land tenure occurred within the village.

[178] The main reason for the preservation of Indian communities seems to be that this [133] area was less desirable for the hacienda [132] type of exploitation. The mountainous character, forests, and cold climate did not make it suitable for the introduction of cattle or cash crops in large estates.[28]

The necessary background for our problem refers to the developments within the Indian villages in relation to the haciendas and to the individualization of land tenure as it took place from the late nineteenth century to the present time.

[621] The changes within the surviving Indian [578] towns can be described from two points of view: (a) disrupting factors making for conflict within the village and breaking the solidarity of the villagers against outsiders; (b) the basic conservatism of the villages, i. e., the survival of fundamental economic conditions which tend to preserve the existence and internal solidarity of the villages.

The main disrupting factor is that of property differences within the village. As pointed out by Tannenbaum[29] for Mexico at large, the villages do not have sufficient land for the needs of all their inhabitants, and considerable differences as to property in land exist within the community, some people owning an adequate amount (according to local standards of living), some

27. Castillo, 1915, 144-5; also cited in Phipps, 1928, 119-120.
28. West, 1949, 17.
29. Tannenbaum, 1929, 58-60.

423 folk culture: some remaining communal
181 property; small private land holdings to a great extent devoted to a subsistence economy; survival of old agricultural techniques and handicrafts.

In spite of this conservatism, however,
182 the decline of the village community goes
423 on. The concentration of land in haciendas, the main process by which the village com-
621 munities tended to disappear, has been checked. But other disruptive tendencies operate within the village: small holdings are insufficient for the growing population; there is a surplus of labor which the national economy is unable to employ; the decay of handicrafts goes on due to industrial competition; the loss of the remaining communal lands of the villages continues although under different forms. The agrarista seizure of communal lands for their exclusive use implies the decay of the communal ownings of the village. The government's restrictions on the use of forests or
[656] the formation of cooperatives to exploit the woods further diminishes the communal holdings of the villages.

Thus, in the economic sphere a basic conservatism is coupled with the pressure of disruptive tendencies which continually make the situation of the village community difficult without, however, being able to break it completely. The same contradiction is to be found in the developments taking place in religion.

668 178 794 the presents given for church support during the years when priests were lacking). They wanted the cargos to be requested directly from the priest. The outcome was not clear at the time of Beals' study, although the future of the cabildo did not seem very promising, since the priest was opposed to it.[60]

[793] In Jarácuaro, where there was no resident priest at the time of our work, the leading sinarquistas were against becoming cargueros because of the expenses involved and because they did not consider this necessary to be good Catholics. Some old men said they should accept cargos before associating with the elders "because they haven't done anything for the village." The fact was, however, that their help and advice were always requested by the local authorities.

Comparing more conservative communities such as Angahuan or the pre-revolutionary Chilchota[61] with Cherán, it is seen that the cabildo gradually loses its rôle as the main organizer of the folk religion and, although surviving, becomes only one mayordomía or group of mayordomías similar to the others. Participation in the cabildo mayordomía as the prerequisite for eldership disappears, as does the elders' rôle of granting sponsorships. Its importance as organizer of the priest's household and caretaker of the church building depends on how much a given priest relies on them.[62] The trend seems to be toward a situation similar to that in Tzintzuntzan, where the old hospital organization has already disappeared.[63]

[656] In some cases the new civil authorities intervene in the organization of festivals. On the one hand, this could be taken as a reunion of Church and State in the local sphere, for the new civil authorities assume religious functions. The feeling still prevails that every man should take a cargo and do something for the town before becoming an officer, and this is being transferred to a new system of local government. To the extent that the folk culture survives, this trend might be expected to continue. The new authorities work in close connection with the priest and mayordomías for a new organization more suited to the changing environment and economic situation than is the old-fashioned cabildo.

60. *Ibid.*, 134 ff.
61. *Ibid.*, 143–44, 215–19.
62. *Ibid.*, 118.
63. Foster, 1948, 201–202.

3;Beals, Carrasco & McCorkle E-5 (1940-1942)1944
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BUILDING MATERIALS
AND THEIR SOURCES
WOOD

313 All wooden materials used in Cherán are pro-
656 duced from local timber. The forests stand al-
[423] most entirely on public lands considered to belong to the town. Formerly, exploitation of any sort was open to all residents who had paid a small fee to an administrative committee. The fee was used to pay federal taxes on the land. Recently, the Department of Forestry of the Federal Government has restricted exploitation of the forests for any purpose other than the collection of firewood to persons having permits. In Cherán this
[474] apparently will mean that persons wishing to cut lumber or shakes (or make charcoal) must join a local cooperative, for the Department of Forestry has refused to give permits to any other group or to individuals.

313 In general, the cutting of lumber is done by
335 specialists. Men who have no land or inadequate land or, in some cases, men who prefer the activity, cut most of the timber and shape it into planks and beams. Shake making is even more specialized, and men who make shakes may do nothing else except look after whatever farm lands they may own. Only a very poor person would attempt to cut the planks and beams needed for a house if he were not a specialist, but anyone might cut poles and stringers used in the roof construction.

313 Woods used in house construction are pine and
137 fir. Pine is most used and two types are distinguished, red (iaríni), the heartwood of large trees, and white, the sapwood of large trees or wood from young trees. From these woods are made shakes, *tejamanil*, *"vigas"* (any piece over 2 inches (5 cm.) in thickness), and planks, or *tablas*.[1]

313 Trees are felled and trimmed with the ax. To
412 cut trees in sections, a two-handled saw is used called a *"sardina."* Splitting is done with oak wedges and an oak maul. Large pieces produced in this fashion are sometimes dressed down with ax or adze. Planks, or *tablas*, are sawed with a long two-handled saw (k'eréri arákutarakua). Logs destined for planks are squared with the ax, marked

[1] The measure of length is the *vara*, which is divided in fourths or thirds. Each fourth contains eight English inches (20 cm.); so the *vara* equals 32 inches, or 81.28 cm. Fourths and inches are measured usually with the hand and fingers, but the span is also used.

4: West K-5 (1946) 1948 NU34 Tarasco NU34
[P. 33-b]

423 311 [656] Before the promulgation of the Federal forest laws (1930's), all members of the pueblo reserved the right to cut wood and lumber in the *monte* with permission of the *representante*. Today a Federal tax must be paid (but is often evaded) by each pueblo for lumber rights. Small plots of land (*desmontes*) may be cleared and planted in any part of the forest, but the farmer must first gain permission of the *representante* and his committee. In addition to the *monte* many pueblos possess certain croplands, called *tierras de la comunidad*, which are not assigned permanently to individuals, but are worked communally, usually by landless farmers, who receive a portion of the harvest as remuneration. The remainder of the crop is often stored in the pueblo as communal property to be sold by the *representante* for the town treasury or to be used as food in time of shortage.

TARASCAN ECONOMY

241 177 still forms the leading crop complex, but the European grains—wheat, barley, the broadbean and lentil—have become intimately associated with Tarascan agriculture. European fruits are grown with native types; Old World vegetables, mainly cabbage, have become an integral part of native food habits. But the modern Tarascan considers such crops, most of which were introduced over 400 years ago, as part of his aboriginal culture. Furthermore, although Tarascans still practice pre-Columbian shifting agriculture on steep slopes, the Old World plow has transformed indigenous cultivation on level and gently sloping lands.

Agricultural acculturation continues constantly. Tarascan *braceros* returning from the United States have brought in apple cuttings from the Yakima Valley, grapevines from California, corn from Iowa. Within the last three decades a South American *Oxalis* (*papa de Castilla*) has been introduced in the Sierra south and west of Lake Pátzcuaro. Again, alfalfa cultivation is slowly penetrating into many parts of the Sierra. Recently [654] the Federal Government introduced a few steel plows in some Tarascan villages, and here and there one sees engine-powered threshing machines slowly replacing the ancient European threshing floor and flail.

313 ing is carried on outside the Sierra. Some beams and planks are cut by the people of Zipiajo and Teremendo, who have large tracts of forest on the slopes of El Zirate, and some farmers of the Lake area and La Cañada cut small amounts of lumber for home use.

313 423 Beals' discussion (1946, pp. 15–19) of legal cutting rights, lumber products, and lumber tools for Cherán can be applied to most of the present Sierra pueblos; therefore, only a summary will be given here. As mentioned above, all Sierra pueblos possess varying amounts of forest land held as common property. Since the late [656] 1930's the Federal Government has attempted to control exploitation by placing all large forest areas under national domain, by encouraging the organization of local lumbering cooperatives, and by periodically inspecting lumbering activities. [651] In most pueblos the Federal tax on lumber products is passed on to the individual woodsmen, who pay the town council a given amount for cutting rights. In other towns lumber cooperatives [474] have been formed to pay the tax, each member contributing dues and having sole cutting rights in the village forest lands.

Although much lumber is for local use (house [439] construction, fences, acqueducts, watering troughs, shakes, etc.), most is cut for the outside market. Raw logs, beams (*vigas*), planks (*vigetas*, *tablas*), and railroad ties of pine and fir are cut and pre- [493] pared for lumber contractors, whose heavy trucks visit the larger villages during the dry season to [492] haul the products to the nearest railhead. Woodcutters of the remote pueblos drag beams and planks to market with the aid of burros and mules. [497] Los Reyes, Tingüindín, Tangamandapio, and Zamora handle the forest products from the western part of the Sierra, while Uruapan, Zacapu, Ajuno Station, and Pátzcuaro serve as lumber points for the eastern section. Formerly a significant forest industry, shake making (performed by skilled specialists) is slowly declining because of the increasing use of tile roofing.[128] Turpentine 314 is no longer distilled locally. (See Beals, 1946, p. 18, for illustration of Tarascan still.) Rather, the resin (*resina*) is gathered in 5-gallon tins and taken to the village, where they are periodically

[128] Although in some pueblos (Pamatácuaro and *ranchos*, Angahuan, Capacuaro) shakes are still made for export to Uruapan, most are used locally. During colonial times and even in the last century large quantities of shakes were shipped from the Sierra to the northern mines, where they were the principal roofing material.